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Where can a book of this type be used? The author says: "It is suitable for use as a reader or first text." This probably would be true for a short college course, but it seems to me inadvisable to attempt its use before the third term of the high school course. It is, however, regrettable, in my opinion, that there are any "short courses" in college or high school in any language. They accomplish little worth while. And in view of what I have said above concerning the desirability of presenting first the *realia* of Spain as a basis for an understanding of Hispanic America, I would prefer to use this book after a book of similar nature on Spain had been read and to use it thus in a "long course," say one of at least three years in length.

Mr. Ewart has added a useful book to the supply of reading texts available. It is fairly simple Spanish, contains interesting material, and is a carefully made and "workable" book. It is to be hoped that other texts as commendable as this one, on other countries of Hispanic America will be forthcoming soon.

LAWRENCE A. WILKINS

NEW YORK CITY

Leyendas Históricas Mejicanas, by Heriberto Frías, edited by James Bardin. University of Virginia. The Macmillan Company, New York. 1918. xix + 181 pages.

Although Mexico is the Spanish-American country nearest us, and although the commercial relations between Mexico and the United States are necessarily important, and although the literature of Mexico is one of the richest of the Spanish-speaking countries, it is nevertheless sadly true that we know very little about the Mexican people and their wonderful literary treasures.

About twenty years ago our students of Spanish had to learn the literature of Spain and all other Spanish countries by translating into English *El Capitán Veneno* of Alarcón. Things have changed a little. The literature of Spain is well represented now in our Spanish programs and that of the Spanish-American countries is now being prepared.

Leyendas Históricas Mejicanas of Heriberto Frías is a collection of tales by one of Mexico's most brilliant men of letters, written in perfect Spanish prose. Linguistically considered, the Spanish of these legendary tales could just as well have been written by a peninsular writer—Larra, for example—for Heriberto Frías has much of the temperament and romanticism of Larra. The mexicanisms appear in the proper names, a few proper nouns, and the like. Professor Bardin has eliminated a number of the Aztec words of the original, so that his edition presents few difficulties in that respect.

Professor Bardin has made a very happy choice in the tales edited. Besides, only a few are presented, so that the book, on the whole, is attractive and not too bulky. It is one that we can use in our second-year courses to add variety to the reading lists and to give our students material from one of the best Mexican writers of our day. There is only one which the

reviewer would not have edited, *La Enamorada de Cuauhtémoc*, because it is too sentimental for our boys and girls, and because it depicts in an exaggerated way the brutal character of Cortés. The inclination of some Spanish-American writers to blame the *conquistadores* and exalt the Indian is quite natural, but not always well founded. Our school texts should not, in the opinion of the reviewer, continue to show up Cortés as a villain, as the tale in question would seem to do. Cortés was a villain in the same sense that nearly all the early conquerors, Spanish, English, Dutch, French, etc., were.

The edition of Professor Bardin contains ten *leyendas* or tales, *La Fundación de Tenochtitlán*, *El Caballero Águila y el Caballero Tigre*, *Rumbo a Tenochtitlán*, *El Juego del Volador*, *El Paraíso guerrero*, *Águila alerta*, *El Amor del Chontal*, *El Monstruo verde*, *La Enamorada de Cuauhtémoc*, *El ermitaño errante*. There is a brief historical introduction, too brief, perhaps, and each tale is accompanied by an explanatory paragraph, showing the background of history on which it is based. These are quite welcome and add a touch of reality to the Spanish *leyenda*. Each tale is provided with abundant footnotes of a historical character, and is followed by exercises in conversation and composition. The linguistic notes are at the end. In the exercises and notes the reviewer has not observed any grievous errors, and the whole book, texts, notes, and exercises and vocabulary are remarkably free from misprints. The grammatical notes, pages 90-117, however, often translate phrases that are quite clear and easy and need no explanation; e. g., *miraba*, 3, 3; *abrumase*, 3, 13; *por todos los rumbos*, 4, 10; *para bien de*, 9, 14; *para vuestro regalo*, 20, 1; *al hablar de la luna*, 25, 6; *por eso*, 29, 17; *resuelto a la batalla*, 39, 11; etc. Professor Bardin may have intended the edition for beginners in the first year. The tales, on the whole, however, are not good material for the first year. They are admirably adapted for the fourth semester of high school work and the second semester of college work. Eleven illustrations and a map of Mexico add to the attractiveness of the book.

Teachers of Spanish will welcome with delight the *Leyendas históricas mexicanas* of Heriberto Frías, so well edited for school use by Professor Bardin. The book is one of the best collections of Spanish tales that we have, the only book of its kind now published, and the accompanying apparatus of exercises, notes, and vocabulary is remarkably free from the grammatical and other errors common in so many of our school texts.

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